

Installation of ground mounted solar panels at Cluniter Farm Cluniter Road Innellan Argyll And Bute

REFERENCE NUMBER: 25/00761/PP

Biodiversity Statement

1. Overview

This proposal seeks to install ground-mounted solar panels at Cluniter Farm in Argyll in a manner that not only supports renewable energy but also proactively conserves, restores, and enhances biodiversity across the development's lifetime, consistent with NatureScot's Developing with Nature guidance.

2. Avoidance and Minimisation

Site selection: Panel locations have been chosen to avoid areas of highest ecological value—such as wetlands, mature woodland or known protected species habitats—to align with the first steps of the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, minimise, restore, offset).

Protected species screening: There are no buildings or structures in the vicinity that would attract protected species (e.g. bats, breeding birds). Mitigation measures—such as timing works to avoid sensitive periods will not be required as a result as the panels will be located in an open field area.

Minimal disturbance: The support legs will be set in the ground with minimal topsoil disturbance and any existing excavated soil re-distributed on the ground. This will retain soil health and existing vegetation.

3. Restoration and Enhancement Measures

The land around the panel installation will be fully restored and remain as before being undeveloped grassland. Any additional planting could interfere with, and cause shadows on the solar panels and reduce the effectiveness of the generation of solar power.

For management of vegetation, there will be seasonal cutting promoting biodiversity while preventing grass overgrowth.

4. Long-Term Management, Monitoring & Resilience.

The area that the panels are erected on will be managed by the applicant covering cutting cycles and maintenance, also including invasive species control.

5. Conclusion

Through thoughtful design by locating 5m from trees and shrubs, Cluniter Farm's solar installation can embody the Developing with Nature principles by avoiding ecological harm.

The management of the land surrounding the installation will leave the site in a similar or better ecological state than before, due to seasonal cutting, aligning tightly with NatureScot's guidance, NPF4 Policy 3(c), and best practice.